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23 April 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
FOUO No. 631

AFRICA

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

EEC FOOD ALLOTMENTS TO AFRICAN NATIONS REPORTED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 16 Mar 79 p 679

[Text] The European Commission has just adopted its proposals concerning food aid programs for grains, powdered milk and butterfat for 1979. In its distribution, it has given priority to the poorest countries and those now experiencing political difficulties or facing natural disasters. The proposed distribution involves a total of 720,500 tons of grain, 150,000 tons of powdered milk and 45,000 tons of butterfat. The cost of these programs is an estimated 540 million accounting units, including about 57 million for transport and distribution costs.

With regard to grain, the Council did not agree to include in the 1979 budget credits corresponding to an increase in the volume of aid (1,135,000 tons) proposed by the Commission, but pledged to raise to that level the Community's direct contribution on the occasion of the renewal of the food aid convention linked to the negotiation of the international wheat agreement. Once these negotiations are adjourned, the Commission intends to propose to the Council that it provide for the anticipated increase and that it include the credits for the purpose in a future supplementary budget. It also proposed increasing the butterfat program to 55,000 tons, in keeping with its initial proposal.

These increases would make it possible to make a greater contribution to growing needs, particularly of the poorest countries. Regarding grains, the international community is still far from achieving the objective of 10 million tons recommended in 1974 by the World Food Conference. For its part, the Commission has noted a great increase in requests addressed to it: 3,226,000 tons this year compared with 2.68 million tons last year.

Likewise, the demand for butterfat is growing, particularly in connection with the increasing importance of projects to develop the dairy industry, such as the one set up by India (Flood II). The proposed allocations are based on a combination of three criteria: level of food needs, per capita income and the deficit in the balance of payments.

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Grain: A total of 340,000 tons is allocated for international organizations or institutions (World Food Program, UNRWA, UNHCR, and so on) and 524,300 tons for countries, with the largest quantities going to Southeast Asian countries and Egypt. Some 56,200 tons are kept in reserve.

Powdered milk: 66,800 tons to organizations (including 30,000 tons to the World Food Program and 25,000 tons to nongovernmental organizations); direct allocations, 78,500 tons (including 31,000 tons to India).

Butterfat: organizations, 13,200 tons; direct allocations, 31,300 tons, most of which go to Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

In the following table, we have shown only the allocations going to African nations.

EEC Food Aid to African Nations in 1979 (in tons)

	Powdered Milk	Butterfat	Grain
Benin			2,500
Cape Verde	300	250	
Comoro Islands			2,500
Congo			1,500
Djibouti	350		3,500
Central African Empire	170		
Egypt	5,000	2,800	90,000
Ethiopia			15,000
Ghana		200	2,000
Guinea-Bissau	600	175	3,500
Guinea			3,000
Gambia			2,500
Upper Volta	2,000	250	5,000
Lesotho	100	100	3,000
Madagascar	500		14,000
Mali	300	105	1,000
Mauritius	700	100	
Mauritania	800	500	6,000
Mozambique	1,000	250	16,500
Niger			2,000
Rwanda		200	1,000
Sao Tome-Principe	50	200	1,000
Senegal	1,860		9,000
Sierra Leone	1,000	200	2,000
Somalia		300	13,500
Sudan		500	4,000
Tanzania	2,000	400	4,000
Chad	800	100	2,000
Zaire			8,000
Zambia	1,500	500	10,000

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STABEX: Transfer to Cape Verde

The Commission agreed to grant the Republic of Cape Verde a nonrepayable transfer of 347,712 accounting units for the 1977 fiscal year. The Republic of Cape Verde has been hit since 1971 by an exceptional drought whose main effect has been a dramatic drop in its only export product: bananas. Since it has been unable to export during this long period, the normal STABEX [Export Receipt Stabilization System] rules (providing for compensation for losses of receipts compared with an average level attained over the four preceding years) permitted no action.

At the EEC-ACP [African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (associated with the EEC)] Council in April 1977, the Community declared that under similar circumstances, it was willing to seek the most favorable possible interpretation of the Convention. For the 1976 fiscal year, for example, it had already, in an analogous case -- Guinea-Bissau -- reconstituted the frame of reference by excluding the 13 exceptional years having existed in that country and by using exports of previous years as a basis.

In the present case, the reconstitution of the reference period was achieved on the basis of exports in the course of the normal years from 1967 to 1970 and the unit values for 1973 to 1996 [sic].

The transfer benefiting Cape Verde brings the total amount transferred for the 1977 fiscal year to 31,472,921 accounting units.

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

BOOK ON MARXISM IN AFRICA REVIEWED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 21 Mar 79 pp 61-62

[Review by Jean-Pierre N'Diaye of the book "Hegel, Marx, Engels et les Problemes de l'Afrique Noire," by Amady Aly Dieng, Editions Sankore, Paris, 1979, 160 pages]

[Text] The Sankore publishing house in Dakar, established and promoted by Senegalese linguist and sociologist Pathe Diagne, has just bought a publishing firm which is putting out several collections.

It is the purpose of the Cabral-Fanon collection to promote ideological confrontations and debates. The first work in the collection, "Hegel, Marx, Engels et les Problemes de l'Afrique Noire," is written by Amady Aly Dieng. It is interesting from more than one standpoint, first of all, by virtue of the fact that it is a critical survey of a body of thought intended to be universal in nature.

Cultural Prejudices

It is also interesting because of the personality of the author, who for many years, both before and after the independences, assumed leadership responsibilities at the head of the FEANF (Federation of Students from Black Africa in France). Having returned to Africa over 10 years ago, it is based on the African context and in the face of the evolution of the continent and the world that he tries to bring up concepts and theories once again, to reevaluate them within the framework of autonomous reflection.

The goal he has set for himself is above all to initiate discussions so as to stimulate thought. The first question is why Marxism, which is intended to be universal in nature, has neither been able to interpret nor integrate correctly the past and present African historical experience. The author tries to supply several elements in response to this important question. In his opinion, the flaw stems first of all from the European Marxists, who have suffered from serious handicaps: very tangible cultural prejudices, particularly, noted among the French, who are marked

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by "assimilationism"; remoteness from the African context, and so on. Cultural chauvinism is a fact that not only does not spare Western Marxism, but strongly penetrates it.

As for the African Marxists, despite their more intimate knowledge of their societies, the "Marxist banner" has been able to conceal divergent class interests among them. Moreover, under the influence -- and sometimes the control -- of Western theoreticians, they have long marked time in the European centricity spread by their brother parties. Actually, does this flaw in European Marxism in the face of realities outside of Europe -- which also illustrates the depth of Chinese-Soviet differences -- not go back to Marx and even Hegel?

When Marx borrowed the dialectic from Hegel, did he completely free himself from the overwhelming weight of the ideology of his time, embodied by Hegel, the greatest philosopher of the triumphant and imperialist European bourgeoisie? Amady Aly Dieng recalls the violence with which Hegel ejects Africa from history and culture. According to the German philosopher, ancient Egypt is not a part of Black Africa.

Did Marx make any attempt to rectify this image? Actually, bent on the study of Western capitalism, he was not interested in the problem and only studied it from the standpoint of the slave trade and slavery as a basis for the primitive accumulation of capital.

Flaws in Marxism

While Marx, in his materialist conception of history, did not in principle exclude any part of mankind, the thought which was intended to be universal did deny Africa its place in history. History, according to these thinkers, begins only with writing and the class struggle.

Amady Aly Dieng is astonished to discover that the real anti-Hegel, the one who restored the completely reversed image of Black African civilizations was not an African Marxist. This fact is highly significant! Supported by this observation, Amady Dieng restores to the concept of civilization its exceptional dimension in history and reestablishes the importance of the fight of Shaykh Anta Diop in the great fight to move back European centricity, situate the foundations of Black civilization in ancient Egypt and give African languages their rightful place. Closing examining certain aspects of the Black nature [negritude], especially from the angle of philosophical theory, Amady Dieng categorically refutes it, denying it the properties of coherence and the seriousness of a doctrine. He exposes in it the variants of the ethnophilosophy put together by the Belgian missionary Placide Tempels in his book "La Philosophie Bantoue," which was published in 1945 and reprinted with a preface by Alioune Diop. With excessive vehemence, he attacks the editor of PRESENCE AFRICAINE for his appreciation of Greek and Latin civilization and his definition of the concept of civilization: "a soul, a conscience, a faith."

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African Philosophy?

On the other hand, it is strange to note that Leopold Sedar Senghor, one of the founders of the concept of the Black nature, is only mentioned in passing, especially since the author admits that he is, and I quote, "the most consistent theoretician of a certain conception of Black civilizations and that his views are debated and greatly discussed by the intellectuals of our generation." But Dieng explains himself: "Many works have been written to glorify or criticize his positions."

Amady Dieng therefore has an opportunity to pose the problems of philosophy in Africa. Is there an African philosophy? The answer is that there is not.

He then relates the conclusions of the First Congress of African Philosophers (1973), which he takes as his own: What has heretofore been called an African philosophy is in fact a vision of the community world, whence a warning about the ethnophilosophy that would lead to a new division of work on the basis of ideas. The Africans would then produce the material based on monographic surveys and actual experiences, material that would then be treated again within a conceptual framework that would be increasingly refined. This is a serious danger. From this standpoint, the "development of a fruitful thought," necessary to the progress of the continent, requires independence and democracy as conditions.

Regarding the professorial approach that is intended to be scientific, one sometimes regrets the heaviness of the style, an almost scholastic aridity. The fact nevertheless remains that the interest of this book lies not only in its clarification of the flaws of Marxism, but in the detailed narration of the debates of intellectuals on fundamental points: the role of philosophy, the teaching of mathematics, the role of the university and systems of education in the development of Black African societies.

These debates revolve around two conceptual poles: Marxism and the nature of being Black (as a form of philosophical theory) and lead to one strong point: the need to develop national languages.

Objectively presented and well-documented, these accounts make it possible to dig out the main issues as well as the criticisms formulated by the author based on his own choices.

Providing long excerpts from the works of philosophers such as Hountoudji, Martien Towa, Tidiani Serpos, Alassane Ndaw, and of precursors such as Cabral, Shaykh Anta Diop, Mahjout Diop, of mathematicians such as Souleymane Niang and intellectuals from the Diaspora such as Aime Cesaire and Carlos Moore, the work of Amady Dieng gives one an idea of the trends of thought that drive the African universities in their aspiration to forge conceptual tools for analyzing the dense reality of the African peoples facing an organized world.

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

MOTORIZATION OF AFRICA, POPULATION STATISTICS REPORTED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 16 Feb 79 pp 398-400

[Text] From 1972 to 1977 the rate of increase of African population and of the number of automobiles was as follows:

1) including South Africa

Population.....+32.4 percent
Number of automobiles.....+33.3 percent
(Of which personal cars were +31.8 percent, commercial +40 percent).

2) without South Africa

Population.....+33.29 percent
Number of automobiles.....+37.9 percent
(Of which personal cars were +33.29 percent, commercial +40 percent).

These figures show a perceptible link between population increase and the number of automobiles.

During the same period, the rate of motorization evolved in the following fashion:

1) including South Africa

Personal cars.....-4.31 percent
Commercial cars.....+1.30 percent

2) without South Africa

Personal cars.....unchanged
Commercial cars.....+5.16 percent

South Africa is not responsible for the increased number of cars in Africa--to the contrary. This increase is due largely to an increase in commercial vehicles. The development of motorization in Africa is thus a type of industrial development and not, as popular myth would have it, a "consumer" development.

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The rate of motorization remains much under that noted in developed countries (more than 600 vehicles for every 1,000 inhabitants of the U.S.). With a total of 7,228,648 vehicles in 1977 (4,126,220 without South Africa) the African continent as a whole had a rate of motorization of 15.34 vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants (8.94 without South Africa). It is true that diverse conditions prevail in the various countries.

In 12 countries there are more than 100,000 vehicles. Of these 12 countries, eight have a rate of motorization much greater than the African average as compared to 4 whose rate is much lower. South Africa's share in the total fleet continues to decrease as it now has no more than 43.5 percent as compared to 46 percent in 1972 and more than 50 percent a dozen years ago.

Grouping the number of automobiles by principal countries (The rate of motorization per 1,000 inhabitants in parenthesis):

South Africa.....	3,162,428 (118.22)
Nigeria.....	633,722 (7.37)
Algeria.....	502,500 (30.02)
Morocco.....	380,771 (20.69)
Libya.....	314,169 (120.74)
Egypt.....	284,588 (7.34)
Kenya.....	163,110 (10.7)
Zaire.....	156,094 (5.94)
Tunisia.....	155,546 (26.55)
Ivory Coast.....	146,663 (20.36)
Zambia.....	139,241 (26.52)
Ghana.....	100,216 (9.68)

Grouping car fleets by geographic zones gives the following results, in decreasing order:

South Africa.....	3,162,428
Maghreb.....	1,038,817
English speaking West Africa.....	802,908
Libya-Egypt.....	598,757
English speaking East Africa	
including Zambia.....	436,222
French speaking West Africa.....	369,669
French speaking Central Africa,	
Zaire, Burundi and Rwanda.....	348,586
Southern Africa not including	
South Africa.....	176,256
Indian Ocean.....	170,179
The Horn of Africa.....	61,993

Other intermediate groupings can be made without particular significance. Nevertheless, it is not without interest to note that in 1977 in Southern Africa, including Rhodesia, there were 3.5 million vehicles, in North

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Africa 1.6 million vehicles, in both English and French speaking West Africa there were about 1.2 million vehicles and in the rest of Africa about 1 million.

From the end of 1976 to the end of 1977, the most marked characteristics of the evolution of the African automobile market has been the incursion of Japanese manufacturers into markets traditionally favorable to European producers. To this advance can be added the recovery of French manufacturers whose competitiveness as much on the technical level as on the marketing level, has been remarkable.

Our study covers the statistical year 1977 rather than 1978 whose figures are not yet all in. Without getting into predictions, it can still be claimed that these characteristics of 1977 will not be much changed during the past year, as will no doubt be confirmed in our next report.

For both short and long term, however, a new market picture is emerging, a picture which will be determined by the following elements:

As a sort of response to the Japanese offensive, technology transfers to Africa from Europe, notably those concerning setting up minifactories for assembling, or partial manufacturing, could be intensified in the coming years. These transfers are generally accompanied by measures to protect the market of implantation. During the same time the level of production below which competitiveness is abridged is rising and making it ever more difficult for local units to achieve autonomy.

The slowly growing interest in Africa of manufacturers not now in the market will eventually cause problems for European and Japanese manufacturers.

The increasingly marked differentiation of Africa's two principal types of political regime as well as the strategic destabilization of large sections of the continent will not be without consequences for the African automobile market.

In the same way, continued coexistence of opposing economic and political principles within the same region or regional grouping, leads to a view of the African automobile market that should take into account many elements at the same time, one not excluding another. An extreme diversity in the market could unfold, as much on the qualitative level as on the quantitative level.

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The Motorization of Africa
African countries in decreasing order of motorization (as of 31 December 1977)

	Population (x 000)	Number of automobiles			Number of vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants	
		Private cars	Commercial vehicles	Buses	Total	Private vehicles
Reunion	515	67,380	21,810	625	89,815	130.8
Libya	2,602	273,258	39,503	1,410	314,169	105
South African Republic	26,750	2,244,148	841,279	77,001	3,162,428	83.89
Djibouti	109	6,462	2,879	?	9,341	58.74
Seychelles	59	2,947	957	?	3,904	49.8
Gabon	544	20,300	14,690	?	34,990	37.38
Mauritius	916	19,912	7,177	1,089	30,496	21.73
Algeria	16,735	333,600	168,900	?	502,500	19.93
Botswana	611	4,412	13,170	250	17,834	7.22
Tunisia	5,857	105,496	46,443	3,607	155,546	18.01
Zambia	5,250	90,462	47,564	1,215	139,241	17.23
Congo	1,434	20,576	12,077	1,067	33,720	14.35
Morocco	18,400	264,419	110,280	6,072	380,771	14.37
Ivory Coast	7,200	91,823	49,676	5,164	146,663	12.75
Liberia	1,650	12,107	9,540	3,623	25,270	7.34
Senegal	5,270	50,015	29,175	?	79,190	9.49
Gambia	526	4,034	2,745	?	6,779	7.66
Sierra Leone	3,150	23,422	13,498	?	36,921	7.43
Cameroon	7,847	51,688	37,677	?	89,365	6.58
Kenya	15,243	92,785	65,404	4,920	163,110	6.08
Angola	6,720	49,500	17,800	?	67,300	7.36
Ghana	10,350	56,450	43,766	?	100,216	5.45
Togo	2,350	16,844	5,313	?	22,157	7.16
Guinea-Bissau	509	2,700	2,000	?	4,700	5.30
Mozambique	9,400	53,440	18,030	?	71,470	5.68
Nigeria	85,895	360,950	272,772	?	633,722	4.20
Egypt	38,800	203,625	68,924	12,039	284,588	5.25

[Table continued on following page]

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Central African Empire	1,847	8,967	4,358	?	13,325	4.85	7.21
Mauritania	1,420	6,887	2,887	233	10,007	4.85	7.04
Benin	3,277	12,367	8,144	?	20,511	3.77	6.25
Zaire	26,250	84,479	63,668	7,947	156,094	3.21	5.94
Madagascar	7,869	32,011	11,887	2,066	45,964	4.06	5.84
Tanzania	15,533	34,433	38,676	4,458	77,567	2.21	4.99
Niger	4,836	11,419	11,852	542	23,813	2.36	4.92
Uganda	12,300	33,905	20,747	1,652	56,304	2.75	4.57
Malawi	5,217	10,445	8,872	335	19,652	2.002	3.76
Sudan	17,500	28,202	32,247	?	60,449	1.61	3.45
Upper Volta	6,200	9,894	11,311	?	21,205	1.59	3.42
Guinea	5,800	9,190	9,825	?	19,015	1.58	3.27
Somalia	3,300	4,237	5,730	?	9,967	1.28	3.02
Rwanda	4,500	6,438	6,796	?	13,235	1.43	2.94
Chad	4,300	5,659	6,337	131	12,127	1.31	2.82
Mali	5,950	10,543	4,069	369	14,981	1.78	2.53
Burundi	4,200	5,386	2,396	75	7,857	1.28	1.87
Ethiopia	30,677	26,570	14,095	2,020	42,685	0.86	1.39
Total With South Africa	465,152	4,863,796	2,226,942	137,910	7,228,648	10.45	15.54
Total Without South Africa	438,602	2,619,648	1,385,663	60,909	4,126,220	5.97	9.40

Situation 31 December 1972

Total With South Africa	351,220	3,837,736	4,557,805	?	5,400,000	10.92	15.34
Total Without South Africa	329,070	1,987,736	976,809	?	2,945,000	5.97	8.94

Comparison with other parts of the world

United States, 1976	216,855	110,351,327	28,197,936	?	138,549,263	514	625
Australia, 1976	14,800	5,284,000	1,290,800	?	6,574,800	357	444
France, 1977	53,200	17,090,000	2,290,000	50,000	19,330,000	320	363
West Germany, 1977	62,200	20,020,197	1,333,121	63,640	21,416,958	322	344
Guam, 1976	85	50,000	10,000	?	60,000	588	706
Peoples Republic of China, 1976	865,000	37,000	675,000	?	712,000	0.042	0.82

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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NYERERE'S DISLIKE OF NUMAYRI--Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere's "pet peeve" is General Ja'far Numayri, OAU president, and not Edem Kodje, the secretary general. Nyerere apparently suspects Numayri of confusing his OAU functions, which should prompt him to be strictly impartial, with his status as chief of state of Sudan that maintains cordial relations with Idi Amin Dada's Uganda. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 21 Mar 79 p 30] 8094

POSSIBLE ZAIRE INVASION FROM ANGOLA--It is not out of the question for Zaire to be once again invaded from Angola despite the detente which Presidents Mobutu and Neto are parading. That is the opinion of a few of NATO's [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] experts. The incessant acts of sabotage carried out by UNITA's rebels have prevented the reopening of the Benguela railroad (a condition imposed by Angola to prevent attacks against Zaire). In addition, a resurgence of the FNLA [Angolan National Liberation Front] forces' military activities in northern Angola could provide Luanda with a pretext for supporting a new incursion into Shaba. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 21 Mar 79 p 30] 8094

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CONGO

SITUATION ON EVE OF THIRD PCT CONGRESS NOTED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 21 Mar 79 pp 43-45

[Article by Jos-Blaise Alima: "For Whom Does the Bell Toll?"]

[Text] Planned for several years, the third extraordinary congress of the PCT [Congolese Labor Party] is to open in Brazzaville on 26 March. Provided that between now and then unexpected events do not cause its deferment for the nth time. Didn't Maj Marien N'Gouabi decide to convoke the PCT's supreme authority a few months before his death? His mysterious assassination on 18 March 1977 led to the shelving of the party's activities. It was said that the late president intended to proceed with a purge of the [party] apparatus.

Reopening the Case

If it is affirmed today in the Congolese capital that the PCT's coming assizes "will immortalize Marien N'Gouabi forever," it is added just as forcefully that the congress will be "placed under the emblem of ideological clarification." It is certain that the ghost of the former chief of the Congolese state will continue to hover over the work of the delegates to the congress. The congress will furthermore probably demand the reopening of the case of Marien N'Gouabi's assassins. In the course of several meetings held recently in different towns of the Congo, demands from demonstrators have already pointed in that direction.

There Has Been No Final Decision

Coming from Nairobi where he represented his country at the council of ministers of the OAU, Theophile Obenga, Congolese minister of foreign affairs at a press conference held on 2 March at the Congo's embassy in Paris, envisaged this possibility not without some humor: "You know," the minister-historian declared in reply to a question, "19 years after President Kennedy was assassinated, there is still talk of reopening the case of his assassins."

While awaiting the opening of the congress, Brazzaville is at fever pitch. The Congolese are wondering whether the 5 February 1979 meeting of the PCT's

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central committee which culminated in the ousting of Gen Joachim Yhombi Opango was the prologue of a scenario, the main portion of which will be performed during the assizes of 26 March. Nothing in fact has been decided with respect to the distribution of responsibilities. And the provisional nature of the present institutions is emphasized. But power does not a priori seem likely to slip away from the trio made up of Sassou Nguesso, Thysere Tchicaya and Sylvain Goma. It is true that the lack of unity at the country's leadership level contributed considerably to perpetuating instability.

No Stone Left Unturned

In its last issue, L'EVEIL CONGOLAIS, the opposition's newspaper, warned: "It is not by changing presidents every 2 years, it is not by convoking regular or extraordinary congresses of the sole party that the Congo will emerge from its political, economic, social and cultural chaos. What the country needs is a government of national union to conceive a new state policy."

The present leaders may retort that the next congress will make it specifically possible for the country to start out again on new bases. Already no stone has been left unturned to explain to public opinion that President N'Gouabi's succession was an error. The national daily MWETI's commentaries reveal the damage done to Marien N'Gouabi's successors. "This parasitic stratum, one of whose supporters led the country until 5 February 1979, was far from representing continuity of President Marien N'Gouabi's work," the paper wrote in its 28 February issue. The allusion to Joachim Yhombi Opango was barely veiled and, again according to MWETI, the 5 February transfer of power should make it possible for the Congo to "emerge from that long labyrinth in which those nostalgic for tyranny had placed them for nearly 2 years." We know that General Yhombi acceded to power in March 1977...

Malfeasance

The point is quite naturally reached of asking questions as to the future of the former president. "No conflict exists between Sassou Nguesso and Yhombi," Obenga confided to us, even adding that the former chief of state was free to go where he pleased. Col Sassou Nguesso, of course, paid homage to his predecessor who had moreover been readmitted to the PCT's central committee from which he was excluded a few years ago. Some people affirm, however, that Yhombi Opango is under house arrest even if the official version uses the term to protection.

It is in any event significant to note that the daily MWETI drew up a strong indictment against the former president who is reproached for a series of acts of malfeasance ranging from embezzling 400 million CFA [African Financial Community (monetary unit)] francs, a gift to the Congo from Algeria, to the purchase of a 17 million CFA franc piece of land, to the creation on his Mpila estate of a zoological park whose maintenance amounted to... 200,000 CFA francs a day.

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The Inevitable

The paper moreover published a photograph of the angry demonstrators who undertook a march heading toward that estate but which a party member was able to contain before they passed through the entrance gate. Asserting that the list of unscrupulous actions was so long that it could not be published in toto, MWETI noted: "He did not wait months or years before acting wrongfully."

Everything is going on as though this campaign were orchestrated for the purpose of preparing public opinion for the inevitable. It is doubtless no coincidence that, along with the press campaign, people readily recall today the existence of a "black list of property wrongfully acquired" which President N'Gouabi considered "the most important element of the radicalizing movement." So during the coming weeks there is a risk of seeing violent storms rage on the banks of the Congo River.

The politician's policy and the settling of accounts will not be the only dishes appearing on the menu of this third extraordinary PCT congress. There is also the economic situation concerning which MWETI's editorialist painted a particularly dark picture. "We ourselves have sinned through excessive phraseology," the journalist confessed. Will the politicians take this evidence into account?

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ETHIOPIA

TIGRE, OROMO PEOPLES' STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE EXAMINED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 26 Jan-1 Feb 79 pp 27-29

/Interview with Seyum Musa, official in charge of the Tigre Peoples' Liberation Front and Taha Idi, official in charge of the Oromo Liberation Front by Fahd al-Harith; date and place not given/

[Text] Khartoum--The reports of the reconnaissance centers of the Eritrean fronts are unanimous that the waves of the Ethiopian offensive supported by Soviet weapons and expertise have begun to vanish without achieving their fundamental goal of turning the Eritrean revolution into a forgotten quantity.

The results produced by the Ethiopian counter-offensive, even though serious and constituting a military setback for the Eritrean revolution, have further motivated the revolution's three factions to continue positive negotiations to reach a basis that would guarantee the minimum degree of their unity in the battlefield or in the negotiations area. The diplomatic efforts continue, despite everything, to explore a practical means to gather Ethiopian and Sudanese representatives around a round table to find a settlement to solve Eritrea's problem.

One of the most important plans projected in this regard is a self-rule plan for the Eritreans within the framework of a confederal unity with Ethiopia--a plan that would secure for Ethiopia naval outlets vital for its economy and its national security. It has been said in this regard that al-Sharif al-Hindi, the Sudanese opposition leader, is engaged in a serious mediation, supported by Arab sides that are also continuing their exploration and mediation efforts, through direct contacts with the Ethiopian regime and with the Soviet Union and Cuba.

It has also been said in this regard that achieving unity of the revolution factions is a must condition before turning from the battlefield to the field of negotiations.

There are Arab sides that encourage the unity of the revolution factions,

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not for the purpose of negotiations with the Ethiopian regime, but for the purpose of exhausting this regime and of contributing toward toppling it, considering that it has turned Ethiopia into a base for the Soviet Union-- a base that poses extreme threats to the petroleum transportation routes and a serious threat to the moderate regimes in the area, in addition to upsetting the balance of powers.

Though the Eritrean factions derive their basic support and weapons from Arab sides, the absence of any Arab understanding on a united approach toward the issue constitutes the factor that prevents the revolution factions from reaching real unity or a common action program forming a framework for the political and national goals.

On the basis of this, and unless fundamental Arab changes occur, there may be no foreseeable end to the fighting in Eritrea.

But what is the current situation in the battlefield?

The waves of the Ethiopian offensive have reached the limit, have realized many of their goals and have led to a wave of human emigration that has escalated the Eritrean revolution's difficulties and has begun to deprive it of one of its important sources of human and economic support. The initial surveys indicate that the number of refugees displaced by the military operations ranges from 200,000 to 400,000 people, most of them moving to Somalia and Sudan.

But there are positive aspects that have begun to make up for these negative aspects. The conditions of the Ethiopian forces have moved from the phase of deployment and concentration in the strategic points to the phase of dispersion and of being strung out, especially since some of these forces have regained a number of Eritrean towns. This increases the burdens of these forces and exposes their flanks constantly and more extensively to the attacks of the revolution factions that still control many of the communication links. Reorganization of the revolution forces will make it possible to re-impose a new blockade on the Ethiopian Army in the towns that it has regained and to hit its communication lines in a long-drawn-out war of attrition about which the Soviet aid may not be able to do much.

There is another positive aspect represented in interesting domestic developments in Ethiopia itself. Recent reports have indicated that mobilization of the major part of the Ethiopian forces for the battle of regaining the [Eritrean] towns has diminished the grip of the army on the provinces demanding self-rule, and has encouraged two local armed revolutions to spread and to pose a threat to the Ethiopian Army's rear lines and, consequently, to pose a threat to the Dirge (The Ethiopian Revolutionary Council). Moreover, this mobilization has encouraged the Ogaden inhabitants to rebel against the Ethiopian occupation.

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The two Ethiopian armed revolutions that have benefited from the Ethiopian Army's predicament in Eritrea are almost unknown to the outside world. They are the revolutions of the Tigre people and the Oromo people, who find support from the Ethiopian Democratic Union Organization, which has carried arms to topple Mengistu Mariam's regime in Ethiopia.

The Tigre People's Liberation Front is one of the armed organizations fighting against the Ethiopian regime since the beginning of 1975. This front is fighting for a democratic national system that recognizes the rights of the nationalities living in Ethiopia to determine their future. The Tigre people launched their armed revolution after the failure of all the political struggles that had resorted to weapons previously to achieve the Tigre people's goals of establishing a democratic national rule that would respond to their aspirations and needs and would save them from the Amharic nationality's monopoly of power in Ethiopia.

The Tigray Province is located in northern Ethiopia, and its capital is Aksum. It is bordered from the north and northeast by Eritrea, from the south and southwest by the Ethiopian province of Wello, and from the west by Sudan.

The tigray population is nearly 5 million who speak the Tigrinya, in addition to a number of local dialects, and to Saho. They are tied to the Eritrean people by language, physical appearance, habits and customs, blood relations and religion.

The Tigre people include both Christians and Moslems, and the origins of a large part of them go back to the tribes that emigrated from the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, such as the Sabians and Himyarites. The Tigre rely on agriculture mainly, and farmers constitute 80 percent of the population, but they use primitive means of cultivation. The farmers also breed livestock, in addition to their work in agriculture. This is why hides are among the main goods exported by the Tigre people to the outside world. [Also found are] various kinds of minerals, such as iron, gold, copper sulfates, potassium and manganese. Potassium was previously exploited by a U.S. firm in cooperation with the Ethiopian government.

Divide and Rule

The Tigre people, like all the other nationalities found in Ethiopia, were subjected to all forms of oppression and exploitation by the Amhara kings. Their property and wealth were seized, and their historical vestiges were destroyed. Numerous attempts were made to destroy them as an entity. The starvations that afflicted the Tigre people caused thousands of their numbers to perish, and led to large-scale emigration to the neighboring countries. With the escalating Amharic oppression and persecution of the Tigre people, the Tigre student movement began its underground struggle in 1972. It raised numerous slogans calling for improving the social conditions of the farmers and for raising their

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standard of living. Little by little, the student movement was able to form an underground popular organization led by the students and struggling against the feudalist and ecclesiastic regime of the late Emperor Haile Selassie. This organization also struggled for a democratic national government in Ethiopia that would give the Tigre people their right to self-determination, because the governments ruling the Tigre were appointed against the people's will. The Tigre people's struggle intensified until the underground organization declared inception of the armed struggle on 18 February 1975, when the organization's first group proceeded to fight the regime from the countryside. The organization's name at the time was the Tigre Students Movement.

On that date and in the wake of a congress held by the organization, its new name became the Tigre People's Liberation Organization. It launched its first two armed operations on that date in Aksum, the capital, and in the town of (Shiri) in the northern part of the country. During those two operations, the organization was able to get hold of large quantities of weapons after having started its armed struggle with only four rifles.

Afterwards, the Tigre people's revolution began to strengthen its coordination with the Eritrean revolution. Before the Ethiopian peasant march proceeded to strike the Eritrean revolution in the middle of 1976, the Ethiopian authorities were able to recruit large numbers of the Tigre people's farmers to take part in this march.

However, the Tigre People's Liberation Front proceeded immediately to expose the goals and dangers of the peasant march, especially since this march was intended to use the Tigre people for jingoistic regional purposes.

The crux of the front's activities at the time was to try to persuade the farmers to refrain from taking part in the march, because the Ethiopian regime's main goal behind involving the Tigre people in the march directed against the Eritrean people was to entrench hostility between the two people, thus enabling it to control the general conditions in the empire through the conventional principle of colonialist domination, namely the principle of divide and rule. Through its instigatory campaign, the front was able to persuade large numbers of farmers to flee with their arms to the countryside and to refrain from taking part in the march. The farmers who were convinced then joined the front's military training camps. These people then engaged in their husbandry while carrying arms as militias under the front's control. The front thus started to grow and expand, and has now become one of the major forces affecting conditions in Ethiopia.

Interview with Seyum Musa

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI correspondent has conducted this interview with Seyum Musa, the official in charge of the front's foreign relations, with the

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aim of shedding more light on the front's goals and political program:

[Question] You are criticized for having resorted to arms after the change that took place in Ethiopia at the end of 1974, thus blocking the path in the face of the Dirge (The Revolution Command Council) to settle the issue of the nationalities?

[Answer] We became firmly convinced that the Dirge does not represent the "Ethiopian peoples" nor the Tigre people. Since assuming power, the Dirge has resorted to arms as a means for settling the nationalities issue. It has been even more violent in this regard than its predecessor, Haile Selassie. It is no longer secret that there weren't in Ethiopia socialist parties capable of attaining power. The slogans that the Dirge raised were for no purpose other than to deceive and mislead the Ethiopian peoples. These slogans were raised more comprehensively and clearly after the United States stopped its large aid for the Dirge, thus forming under those conditions the visa for the Soviet Union to enter Ethiopia.

We Demand Democratic Rule

[Question] Don't you think that under the present conditions the Dirge is capable of reaching a democratic solution for the nationalities issue?

[Answer] The Dirge regime is a mercenary regime that cooperates with foreign countries to implement its private interests. It is a dictatorial military regime and, therefore, cannot reach a sound democratic solution for the nationalities issue.

[Question] Are you struggling for the Tigray's independence from Ethiopia?

[Answer] Our goals are clear. We are struggling for the establishment of a democratic national rule in all of Ethiopia that recognizes the right of nationalities to self-determination, so that the Tigre people may adopt a democratic national rule in their country--a rule that will achieve their aspirations for justice, freedom and progress.

[Question] What is your position vis-a-vis the issues of Eritrea and Western Somalia?

[Answer] We support Eritrea's independence. We also support the right of the Somali people in the Ogaden to determine their future. They should have full freedom to join Ethiopia or to set up their independent state in the Ogaden.

[Question] Do you coordinate with the other parties in the Ethiopian resistance?

[Answer] Our relations with the Eritrean revolution are historical and deep-rooted. We have also been coordinating for not a short time with the

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Western Somalia Liberation Front and with the Oromo People's Liberation Front. We are exerting efforts to bolster our relations with these factions.

Revolutionary Party and Liberation Front

[Question] It has been reported that you clashed recently with the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party and with the Ethiopian Democratic Union?

[Answer] The Revolutionary Party does not recognize the Tigre People's Liberation Front because it considers us a regional movement. We are struggling for our rights and we refuse to recognize the Ethiopian borders as delineated by colonialism after World War II because these borders did not reflect the will and rights of the peoples. Our struggle for our rights has had a negative effect on the Ethiopian Democratic Union because this organization's leadership represents the traditional faces among the Tigre. Prince (Mengisha), for example, was ruler of the Tigre during Emperor Haile Selassie's era. Consequently, he rejects the growth of a Tigre liberation movement that surpasses his custodianship.

We Arrested U.S. Pilot

[Question] What was your latest military operation?

[Answer] We were recently able to arrest a U.S. pilot and the helicopter he was flying. During the locust control campaign launched by the regime, a spraying aircraft belonging to the East Africa Company landed in Temben area because of a sudden damage. The front's revolutionaries surrounded it as a precaution. Shortly afterwards, a helicopter of the Ethiopian Air Force, which came to help the first aircraft, landed. We took control of the two aircraft, which were carrying three Ethiopian engineers and a U.S. pilot. A week later, we released the Ethiopians and the spraying aircraft and kept the U.S. pilot, named George (Croyce), under arrest. He is 36 years old and we have found out that he fought in Vietnam for 2 years.

Israeli and South Korean Role

[Question] Does this mean, in your opinion, that the United States is still advancing aid to the Ethiopian regime?

[Answer] Our information confirms that South Korea and Israel are still advancing aid to the Dirge. This would not be done without the approval of the United States. Moreover, the United States itself supplied the Dirge in the middle of last year with military equipment valued at 30 million dollars, including spare parts for the F-5 aircraft and for tanks. We view this U.S. aid in the same way that we view the Soviet aid to the Dirge regime. We consider it aid in the interest of the military clique and against the interests of the Ethiopian peoples.

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[Question] What are the countries that assist you?

[Answer] We seized the weapons that we have in our possession in the battles we waged against the enemy. There is no country that advances aid to us. We are now making contacts with some Arab countries in the hope of getting their support. We have great hopes that these countries will respond to our request for aid. We had previously paved the way for these contacts through visits to some Arab capitals, where we found considerable response.

This Is Oromo

The Oromo tribes form the biggest distinctive nationality living in Ethiopia at present. These tribes have given their name to the areas in which they live. The area of the Oromo territories amounts to 600,000 square kilometers. They are bordered from the south by Somalia and Kenya, from the east by Afar (Djibouti at present) and the Ogaden and from the west by Sudan.

The population of the Oromo is 15 million, 90 percent of whom live in cultivating vegetables and qat. The rest make a living from livestock breeding. The biggest two Oromo tribes are the Borana and the (Barareta). In addition to these two tribes, there are several small tribes, including the (Addre) tribe in the east, i.e. in Harar, the Mao tribe in the west, i.e. in Wellegga province. The Oromos speak their own local unwritten language. A large part of them also speak Amharic, in addition to Arabic and some of the European languages prevailing in the neighboring countries. The illiteracy rate among the Oromos reaches 85 percent. Moslems constitute 75 percent of the Oromos, but few of them know Arabic. Almost 22 percent of the Oromos are Christians, and the rest are pagans.

The Amhara were able to occupy the Oromo in successive periods which started in 1877 and ended in 1933. Before the Amharic occupation, the Oromo territories were divided into provinces ruled by sultans, and their political system was very similar to the republican system, contrary to the monarchic system established in Ethiopia. Every province elected its sultan, and the sultans then met in the form of a general assembly which in turn elected the president of the Oromos. This system was called the (Gada) system, and the president's election often took place in (Medalawe) in Bale Province.

The Amhara were able to occupy the Oromo territory during the last quarter of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

However, the Oromo people did not submit to the Amharic occupation, and started to fight this occupation from the outset, and are still fighting to regain the unity and independence of their territories. In an interview with AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, Taha Idi, the official in charge of the Oromo Liberation Front which leads the Oromo people's struggle, said in this regard:

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Beginning of Uprising

Our people have waged numerous struggles since 1875 against the Ethiopian and European occupation that has colonized our country.

In 1928, the well-known and major uprising took place in the province of Wello. To suppress this uprising, the Amhara sought the help of the British Air Force present in one of the bases in Aden at the time. Similar uprisings took place in various parts of the Oromo territories in 1942, and the same methods used to suppress the Wello uprising were used to suppress these uprisings also.

In 1936, the Oromo people living in the west were able to set up their state in the provinces of Wellegga, Jimma and Ileo. The League of Nations was asked to recognize this state at the time. The message demanding this recognition is present in the British Foreign Office now.

In 1941 and after the defeat of the Italians in Ethiopia and Eritrea and the victory of the allies, the Oromo people in Harar and in Addis Ababa asked the British government to give them independence and not to link them to the ecclesiastical regime of Emperor Haile Selassie. But British colonialism entrenched Haile Selassie's occupation and rule over the Oromo country. It then became evident to our people that independence cannot be granted through the so-called international legitimacy, and they thus embarked on movements against Ethiopian colonialism. They proceeded with their armed struggle in 1960 under the leadership of the leaders of the rural areas and provinces. The armed struggle in the countryside was accompanied by political struggle in the cities, especially in Addis Ababa.

The political struggle in the form of underground and open movements was led at the time by Gen Tadesse Birru and Lt Mammo (Mismar). However, the development of the political struggle movement and its polarization of broad popular masses made Emperor Haile Selassie arrest the two aforementioned leaders. After a period of detention, Haile Selassie executed Lieutenant Mammo by hanging. Meanwhile, Gen Tadesse Birru was kept under detention.

After the Dirge took over power in 1975, General Tadesse was released in the hope that he would play a role in pacifying the popular resistance that had gained strength at the time in Bale area. However, the Dirge felt that Tadesse was playing a role against it, and so the general was assassinated.

Issue Is One of Independence

When their struggles experienced numerous setbacks as a result of Haile Selassie's employment of British and Israeli expertise to wipe out their resistance movement, the Oromo people started underground activity in 1971 under the name of the Oromo People's Liberation Front. This activity

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resulted in again touching off the armed struggle in the area of (Shersher), located in Harar Province, in 1973. However, the popular movement that started at the time throughout Ethiopia to overthrow Haile Selassie led, as is well-known, to the army's seizure of power under the slogans that had been raised by the popular movement.

The first step that the Ethiopian Military Council adopted at the time was to issue its well-known so-called agrarian reform law. As a result of these changes, the organization [presumably Oromo Front] was forced to reconsider its strategy so as to expose the real intentions of the new regime. Shortly afterwards, it became evident to the organization that the Dirge's slogans and resolutions were nothing but an act to isolate the organization and the other liberation movements from the masses.

The popular organizations then held a general congress to decide to continue the armed struggle for the unity and independence of the Oromo territories. The new start came in October 1974 on the basis of a clear program considering the issue not an issue of land distribution but an issue of the Oromo's independence and of the right of the nationalities to self-determination. In that period and until the beginning of 1976, our work concentrated on political instigation and on exposing the Dirge's misleading slogans. The front's second congress was held at the beginning of 1976, and it was decided in this congress to entrench the 1974 program. It was also decided to begin the armed struggle side by side with the political action. Our military operations that started at the time have continued until the present, and are intensifying clearly day after day.

Our Opinion of Dirge Regime

[Question] You have not given the Dirge regime a chance to make sure of its intentions regarding a solution to the nationalities issue?

[Answer] We gave the regime numerous chances, until we became certain that Haile Selassie's regime has been replaced by another regime whose colonialist concepts are not different from the preceding regime's. The fundamental issue that toppled Haile Selassie's regime was the nationalities issue. The actions of the new military regime have come to underline its inability to solve this problem. On the contrary, it has become certain to the various nationalities that the Dirge regime's dictatorial actions are worse than Haile Selassie's regime. This fact has become well-known to the entire world. When we struggled in the past, Haile Selassie's regime would take us to prisons, then try us and issue its death sentences. The new military regime, especially Mengistu's regime, kills without any trial. The socialist slogans raised by the Dirge are nothing but a cover for the Soviets, and are only intended to confuse world public opinion and to get Soviet support to implement the regime's expansionist policies at the expense of the legitimate rights of the nationalities.

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Policy of Gaining Time

[Question] Mengistu's regime is urging the nationalities to reach agreement on the basis of a democratic national system that recognizes the nationalities' right to self-determination within the framework of Ethiopia. What is your position?

[Answer] Mengistu's aim behind this call is to mislead public opinion so as to gain time and implement his policy, as I have already pointed out. We are certain, and this is made obvious by the Dirge's policy, that the Dirge cannot settle the nationalities issue in Ethiopia on the basis of the principle of the right to self-determination. Even if this is done, we have historical rights which we cannot concede. The Oromo people, and not the Dirge, are the ones to determine their future and destiny. In any case, we will not abandon full independence.

[Question] In light of the recent developments in Ethiopia and in the area in the past 2 years, especially the developments that have made the Soviet Union a major force in Ethiopia, don't you fear that you will fall into the axis hostile to the Soviet Union?

[Answer] First, the Soviet Union is supporting our enemy with all kinds of heavy weapons, tanks and aircraft. Most of the experts and technicians in Ethiopia are Russians and Cubans. The Cubans have military bases in the Haramaia area in Harar Province, in Shashamani in Arusi Province and in Addis Ababa.

In light of this, do you expect us to heap praise on the Soviet Union just because it raises socialist slogans. The Soviet Union has turned into a major force hostile to our people and to their legitimate struggle. The Soviet Union is supporting a colonialist regime that has usurped our people's rights. We will fight this support the same way we are fighting the Ethiopian regime itself.

As for our being or not being afraid to fall into the traps of the forces hostile to the Soviet Union, this is a clear issue insofar as we are concerned. Our position toward world imperialism is clear. This imperialism, like colonialism and racism, supports the Ethiopian regime, which has usurped our rights. Our position, which rejects Soviet intervention, is the same position that rejects the imperialist policy in the area and in the world.

[Question] Do you believe that the Oromo have the components for establishing an independent state?

[Answer] Certainly. The Ethiopian economy is built on the economy of our country. In addition to the wealth in coffee produced by our lands, there are vast mineral resources and fertile cultivable lands. We also have a people whose relations with their neighbors in Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea and Kenya are warm.

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We Support Eritrea's Independence

[Question] What is your position toward the Eritrean issue?

[Answer] We support the full independence of Eritrea.

[Question] And what is your position toward the Western Somalia issue?

[Answer] We support the Ogaden people's right to self-determination.

[Question] On whom do you rely for armament and supplies?

[Answer] We depend fundamentally on ourselves and on what aid our people offer us.

[Question] What are your foreign relations?

[Answer] We have firm relations with the liberation organizations in the area, especially with the Eritrean and Somali liberation fronts.

[Question] It is said that your relations with the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party and with the Ethiopian Democratic Union are bad?

[Answer] Correct. The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party does not recognize Oromo's or Eritrea's independence. This party's conflict with the regime is a conflict for power. The Ethiopian Democratic Union's position is not much different, despite the big difference in the policy of the two organizations.

We Have Found Arab Sympathy

[Question] Do you have relations with the Arab world?

[Answer] We have found great sympathy from numerous Arab countries, and we have received great encouragement from these countries and from some African countries. But so far, these countries have not advanced any aid to us.

[Question] Can we know the approximate number of your fighting forces?

[Answer] The Oromo population is 15 million people, as you know. So you can make your own estimate.

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ETHIOPIA

BRIEFS

NILE DAMS--In exchange for the use of naval facilities at Massawa, Assab and the Dahlak Islands, the USSR is to build about 20 dams along the upper Blue Nile. This project, intended to irrigate croplands, risks cutting into Egypt's water supply. [Text] [Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 2 Apr 79 p 35]

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RHODESIA

BRIEFS

SECURITY FOR ELECTIONS--For the elections, it is estimated that Rhodesian Security Force strength will exceed 60,000 men, a figure never before attained. More than 7,000 men in the 50-59 age-bracket will be mobilized for urban police forces. Their role will be to protect the balloting places.
[Excerpt] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 6 Apr 79 p 889]

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ZAIRE

REGIME'S FATE TO BE DETERMINED WITHIN NEXT FEW WEEKS

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 21 Mar 79 pp 47, 48

[Article by Jos-Blaise Alima: "The Great Upheaval"]

[Text] The changes President Mobutu decided upon last 6 March caused astonishment because of their broad scope. The reshuffling of the government did in fact lead to the no less significant reshuffling of the National Security Council and of the MPR (Revolutionary Popular Movement, the sole party).

For many observers the outstanding fact of that "great upheaval" was the strong comeback of Nguza Karl I Bond who in addition to recuperating the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also made a well-noticed return to the political bureau. That was an unheard of achievement in African political annals.

Less than 2 years ago the fate of Karl I Bond seemed sealed forever and his future was most uncertain. Contrary to all expectations, General Mobutu has just released him from the dungeons by entrusting to him once again a position which contributed to creating his prestige.

Some people will not fail to see in that unexpected return the pressure of the Western countries which intervened 18 months ago in behalf of Karl I Bond who had previously been condemned to death. But it may be imagined that a burst of nationalism had some bearing on the decisions of the Zairian president who if necessary gives proof of some courage.

Zaire's economic situation is hardly brilliant at this time. Some of its Western partners quite simply believe that the country can no longer recover. Last 6 March a group of American experts recommended to the House of Representatives' subcommittee on foreign affairs that it request the Washington government to withdraw its support of President Mobutu's regime. According to the Americans, Zaire's foreign debt amounts to over \$3 billion.

Actually, everything leads one to think that the fate of the present Zairian regime will be decided in the course of the next few weeks. To those who recommend dropping General Mobutu, Richard Moose, undersecretary of state for African affairs, retorts that American interests require continuing aid to

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Zaire. He nevertheless notes that the United States will go on exerting pressure to bring about reforms in Kinshasa. The recent reshuffle may to a certain extent fit into this context. It was not by chance that it occurred on the eve of the Zairian president's meeting with the CNPF [National Council of French Employers] as well as on that of the Washington negotiations and the meeting of Zaire's main creditors in Brussels. General Mobutu no doubt wished to prove his determination to put his house back in order. This would for example explain the designation of the former governor of the Bank of Zaire, Bofossa Wambea Nkomo who is considered a strict manager as head of the Ministry of Finance.

But the 6 March reshuffle also seems to be an internal policy operation. Karl I Bond's return is in fact accompanied by that of other "barons," such as Sakombi Inongo, former minister of national orientation and former governor of Kinshasa, who after an extended journey across a desert, is taking charge of the JMPR [Youth of the Popular Movement of the Revolution]. Even more spectacular seems to be the rehabilitation of Mungul Diaka who has become minister of higher and scientific education. Mungul Diaka, together with Mafema Nga Zeng, the new minister of territorial administration, represents the province of Bandundu, an area traditionally hostile to General Mobutu. This means the Zairian president paid attention to regional balance. To such an extent that an observer could state that for the first time "no region is inadequately represented in the government."

The Priority of Priorities

So everything is happening as though national reconciliation has become the priority of priorities. A policy already outlined a few months ago when other "historic leaders," such as Bomboko and Nendaka, were reintegrated into the MPR's political bureau after being properly elected to parliament whose former president, Bo-Boliko Lokonga, was named prime minister. His record as a trade unionist and his connections with international trade union circles certainly had something to do with his promotion. It remains that the opening up still shows its limitations for some "historic leaders"--Kashumura and Kamitatu, for example--if they have returned to the country they have still not been readmitted to the national political circuit.

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